

Poem



"Walking"

By Alice Johansen

Walking

I wear your hat,
your sweat stains on the band,
and while I walk
my sweat mixes with yours
like on those Sunday afternoons
when we enjoyed each other,
ignored the urgencies
of laundry, unpaid bills,
and dinner preparation.

You had a dozen hats or more.
but they're long gone,
except this one,
your favorite.
It's much too big for me,
makes me look foolish,
i suppose
but fashion's not the point.

I walk alone,
touch your hat,
the brim, the crown.
I pick up speed and walk until
my brow is damp.

Despite the afternoon's warmth
I pull your sweater close,
its arms too long,
but yours
not long enough.

Poem



"Winter Break"

By Seena Granowsky

Winter Break

Snow and ice forgotten,

The sun invites me to sit in the yard.

I expect only bare branches, dead leaves, mud.

Instead grass presents a luminescent green carpet.

Yellow flowerets adorn the mahonia bush,

Bright orange berries light up nandina,

Clusters of purple berries fill branches of privet trees.

Red flowers with yellow fibrous centers cling to the camelia bush.

A Carolina winter awash with color.

Poem



"Names, So Many Names"

By Brenda Loy Wilson

Names, So Many Names

Someday my children will find
the bronze-colored guest book residing
deep in a box marked 'Fragile - Mama, Daddy.'
Dates, time of service, their grandparents'
names recorded in calligraphy,
flowing script in black ink.

This book holds page after page of names
of the bereaved who paid respects.
Co-workers, friends, neighbors from decades ago,
writers, bankers, textile workers, farmers.
They all came.
The sharp crack of hearts audible.

Mama's hair lay natural, a slight wave on the left,
her makeup subtle, as though she herself had applied
face powder with a hint of rouge.
The family chose a flowered blue dress, recently sewn.
Two emeralds, an amethyst, a peridot:
her Mother's pin, the only adornment.

At the grave site I stumbled,
did not want to sit in the folding chair.
What were the final words spoken.
Was a storm approaching
or did a sudden squall produce
stifling humidity that blended with salty tears.

My memory is clear on one thing.
I did not want Mama to rest for eternity
beside Daddy.
Yet there he was,
next to her,
in their prepaid double plot.

Poem



"Home"

By Janet R. Sady

Home

"I was born very far away from where I'm supposed to be, so I'm on my way home."

My siblings say, "You don't belong in this family."

I ask my mother, "Was I adopted?"

She smacks me—not too hard, but enough to say—

"Don't be ridiculous."

Why would they say I don't belong? I don't know.

Is it because I'm the only one with my nose in a book?

The one who has to be called multiple times for dinner?

Because, she's travelling to the Orient with Pearl S. Buck,

Or, off with Jack London in the "Call of the Wild."

Is it because, I'm never quiet—questioning—why?

Not quick to accept blind reason—

Using my imagination to make up "stories" to tell.

What am I looking for?

Is it strangers who use words to convey their thoughts?

Or memoirs—even though my older sister says, "When did that happen?"

I know I have a home in heaven—

I believe this world is not my permanent home.

But, here and now, I've found a home with writers—people like me—

who are striving to get closer to home by painting pictures with words.

Poem



"Boop!"

By John D. Spurrier

Boop!

I say "boop" to make my 2 year-old grandson laugh.

When he says "boop", Grandma and I laugh.

In the car, I say "boop" to learn if he is awake.

What, you say, is boop?

It isn't a coop nor a hoop.

It isn't goop nor a loop.

It isn't soup and definitely not poop.

Boop is not in the dictionary.

Do you know what boop means?

To my grandson and me, boop means love.

Boop! Boop! Boop!

Boop! Boop!